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## Hiking to Machu Picchu

Summer might be the busiest time to see [Machu Picchu](#), but it's the most beautiful time to see blue skies, lush green grass, and awe-inspiring views. Whether you're up for the challenge of hiking the [Inca Trail](#) or would prefer the [Inca Rail](#), it's wise to spend a few days casually sightseeing in Cusco to adjust to the altitude first. This small Peruvian town is postcard-perfect, with a hilltop that lights up at night, a bustling local market, and countless alpaca stores to splurge on a sweater for the chilly nights. If you're on the fence about scaling [Huayna Picchu](#) — the mountain in front of Machu Picchu with the killer views, opt in — trust us.

**Where to Stay:** Have you passed the point in your life where hostels are, um fun? If so, it's worth the splurge to stay at the [J.W. Marriott Cusco](#), where comfy beds make restless nights thanks to altitude sickness much better. Same for Aguas Calientes — which also caters to the backpacker crowd — a stay at [Sumaq](#) will make getting up 4 a.m. more bearable.